

STRATEGIC PLAN



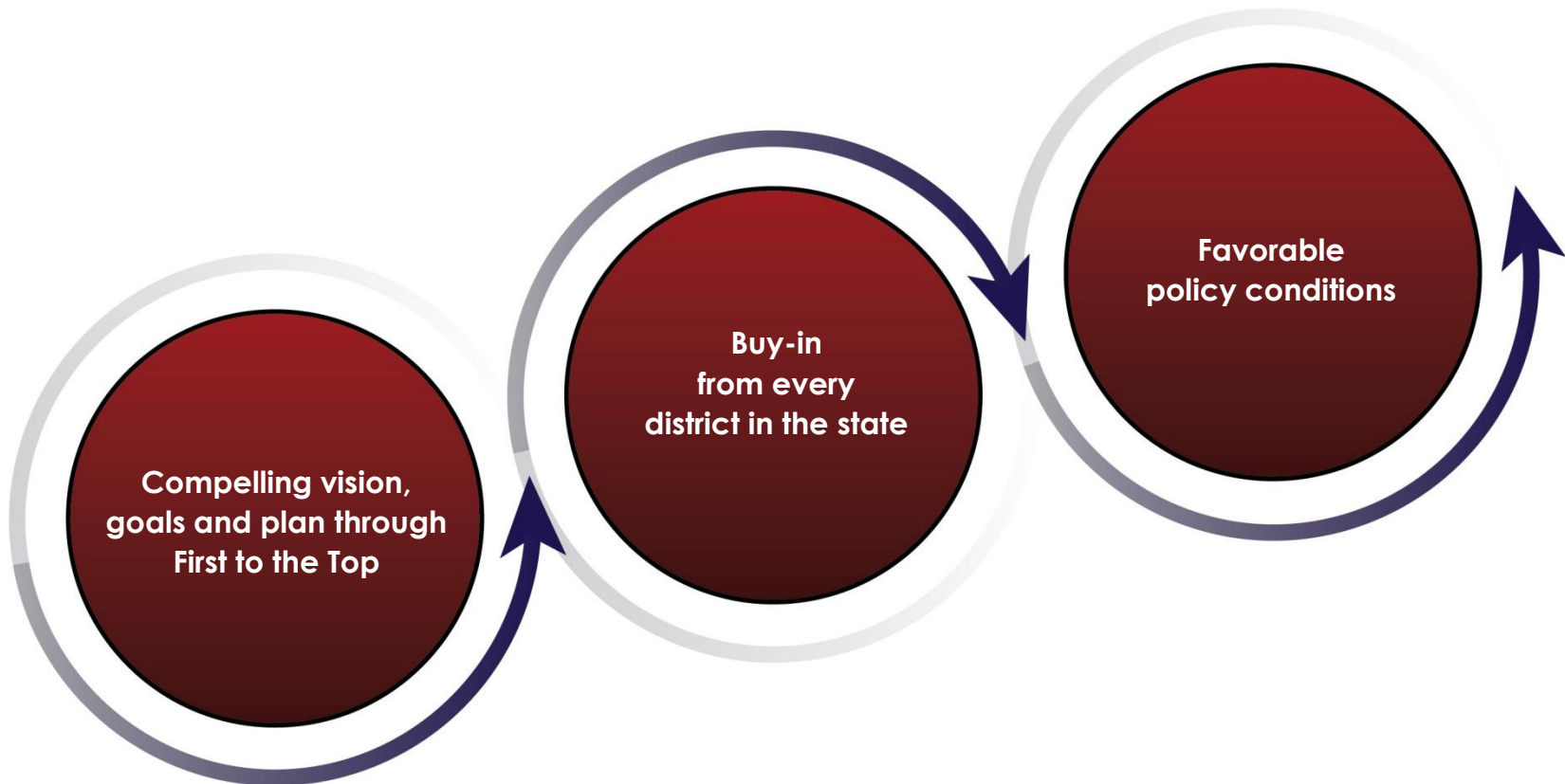
TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

SEPTEMBER 2011



In our winning Race to the Top plan, we articulated a compelling vision for education in Tennessee

We seek to be the fastest improving state in the nation.

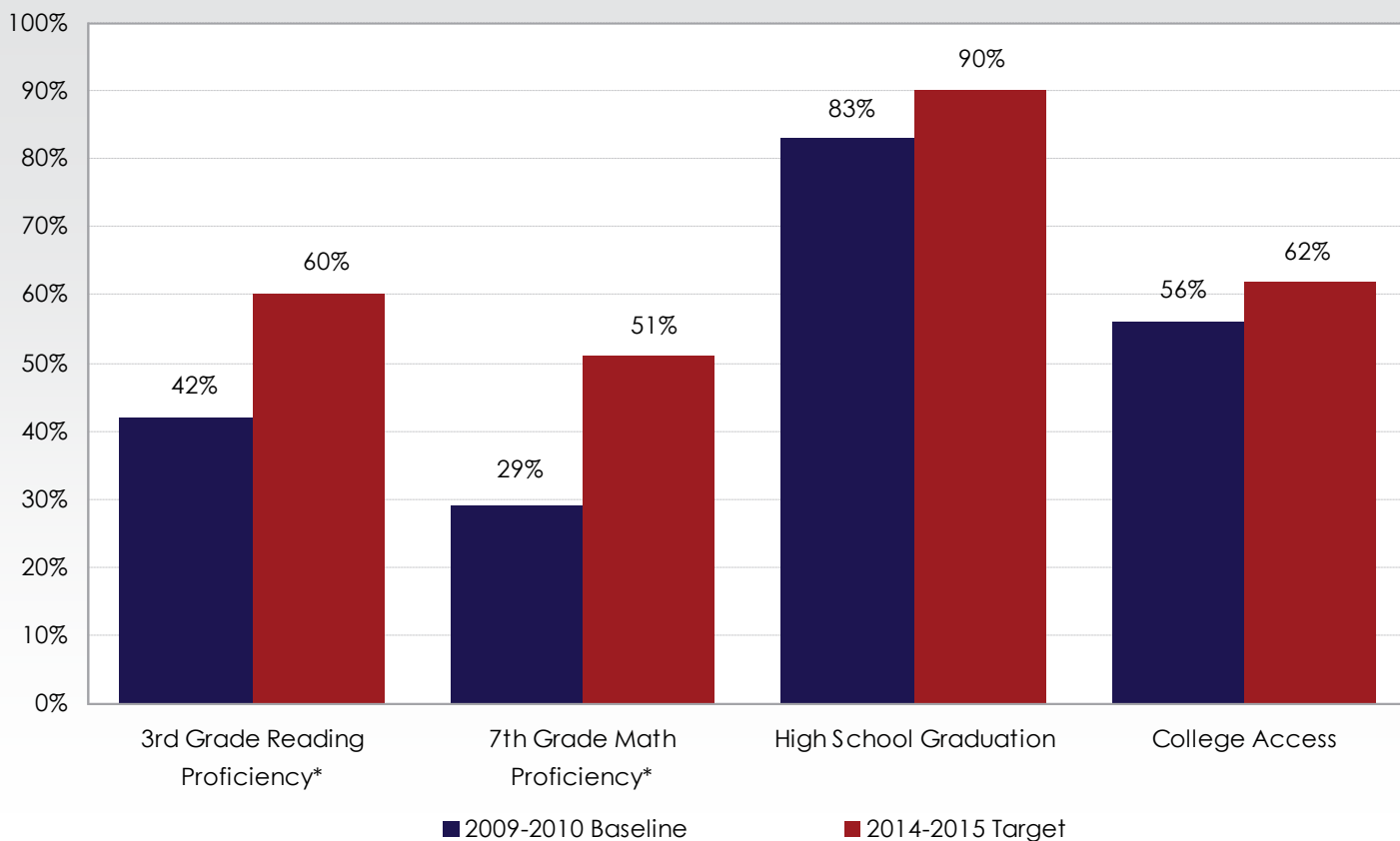




Reaching our First to the Top goals will dramatically change the trajectory of our education system

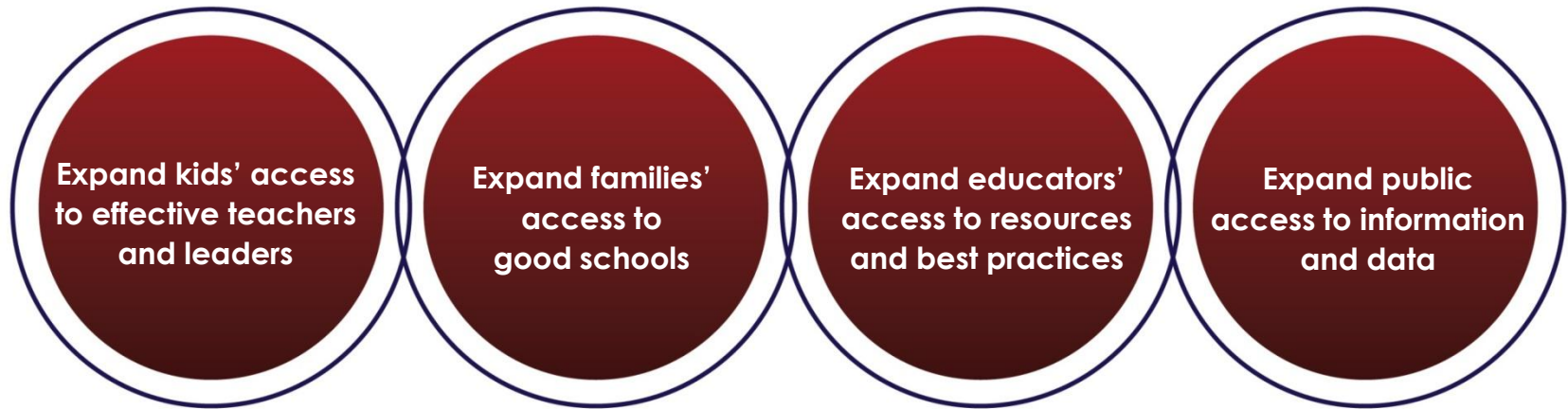
In addition to these goals for all students, we will strive to reduce the achievement gap by at least 10% each year.

FIRST TO THE TOP GOALS



*As measured by TCAP, state exams.
Source: Tennessee First To The Top application.

We will pursue four strategic priorities to support districts in reaching their ambitious goals



In each priority, we will place an emphasis on addressing rural district challenges and gaps.

Priority 1

DRIVING BELIEF: Tennessee students need great teachers and leaders, focused on preparing their students for college and career. Our best teachers and leaders should reach as many kids as possible.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Create marketplaces and supports for districts to hire effective teachers and principals
- Strengthen certification criteria and link licensure more clearly to effective teaching
- Expand effective teacher preparation programs
- Expand the reach of effective teachers and leaders to access more kids



Priority 2

DRIVING BELIEF: Parents should be able to choose from among multiple, high-quality school options. No child should be stuck in a failing school.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Turn around the lowest-performing schools in the state through the Achievement School District
- Help districts and schools that are not meeting goals to create plans to improve
- Support and incent districts to build strong schools
- Increase families' access to high-quality options through inter- and intra-district choice, distance learning, and strong charter schools



Priority 3

DRIVING BELIEF: Teachers need access to better professional development materials and resources to help improve their practice. The state must lead the effort to implement the Common Core standards.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Ensure effective implementation of Common Core standards and provide aligned resources and best practices to educators
- Expand districts' access to strong formative and summative assessments in tested and non-tested subjects
- Through field service centers, help educators access best practices from high performing schools and content experts to enhance their overall effectiveness and to improve their content delivery
- Ensure that Tennessee has a world-class Career & Technical Education program that graduates all high school students ready to succeed in college and tomorrow's careers



Priority 4

DRIVING BELIEF: The state department of education must ensure that every stakeholder has access to the information needed to demand a quality school system. Good data, not ideology, will drive the choices we make at the state level.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Build transparent data and communication structures that consistently communicate results to districts, families and the public
- Drive higher volume of research through internal studies, build open-source data capacity, and encourage outside researchers to analyze our work
- Communicate consistently and effectively with educators and families about the state of reforms, future plans and results

